

<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainability Commission Green Infrastructure Working Group Meeting Report</p>
--

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd 4:30pm, Dept. of Planning

Subject: Green Infrastructure Working Group Work Session

In Attendance: Alyson Taylor, Ali Smith, Jonas Risen, Miriam Avins, Chris Streb, Mackenzie Paull, Russ Moss, Pearnell Wilson, Kate Edwards, Sarah Zaleski

Discussion: The meeting began with a presentation by Ted Rouse of Chesapeake Sustainable Business Alliance (CSBA) about various efforts around the city connected with food production and increasing the amount of locally grown produce and Urban Farms. Discussion then moved onto a brief revisit to the vision statement to wrap up and present the vision statement which the group will be using. The group brainstormed ideas for working group goals.

Topics addressed:

- Urban Agriculture Task Force / Local Food Production
 - Public Schools are interested in buying more locally produced foods, and other local institutions may also be open to this idea – one of our goals could be to foster growth in the local food production industry to tap into this market.
 - Increase the amount of Urban Agriculture and provide job opportunities to Baltimore residents
 - Druid Hill Park could possibly be a good location for an Urban Farm Incubator, which could provide education, technical assistance, temporary land and other resources to city residents who are interested in taking up Urban Agriculture as a business venture.
 - CSBA is considering creating a Local Food Brokerage which could supply local institutions with local foods and help local farmers know what types of crops the institutions are interested in buying
 - Arabbers and corner stores could be used for distribution of local foods to city residents
 - There are numerous examples of urban food projects around the country which Baltimore could use as models:
 - Boston (Roxbury & Lincoln) The Food Project
 - Chicago – Growing Home and proposed Windy City Urban Farm
 - Philadelphia – Spin Farming, provides a business model of urban agriculture for entrepreneurs
 - Milwaukee – Growing Power, another business model
 - NYC, Just Food
- Vision Statement discussion
 - Proposed vision statement:
“Our vision for Baltimore is to have a diverse, accessible, and connected system of parks, streets, and community open spaces, integrated with the built environment, that provide wildlife habitat and support ecological processes, and create healthy, safe, comfortable, well-maintained places which engage people in recreational and restorative outdoor activity, promote a sense of stewardship, and provide economic opportunities for the citizens of the city.”
 - Need to add access to fresh and healthy foods back into the vision statement
- Goals Brainstorming discussion
 - To begin discussion goals were separated into the following categories, however these categories can change and were just used to start the conversation.

Recreational & Restorative Outdoor Activity

- Demonstration gardens with open access

Stewardship

- Training program for Rec & Parks employees to learn to use sustainable techniques to manage green space
- Make most productive use of land

Food Systems

- Healthier & local food in schools, hospitals, and institutions
- Vacant land made productive for agricultural purposes
- Access to fresh food for all Baltimoreans
- Multi-modal distribution
- Use food to engage children
- Revise regulations to allow production (i.e. zoning)
- Reduce average annual food mile for Baltimore
- Improve nutrition for Baltimore residents (i.e. through fresher foods)
- 100 Acres of urban farmland within 3 years

Neighborhood Green Space

- Reducing hardscape in neighborhoods/ yards and encourage gardening
- Promote alley greening
- Create mechanism for preserving community managed open space
- Everyone who wants to is able to grow their own food
- Every street does what it can to have street trees and water management features

Public Parks

- Increase public use
- Reduce invasive species by X%
- Native plantings & minimal maintenance choices
- Reduce lawn

Biodiversity / Ecology

- Increase habitat
- Increase tree variety
- Decrease use of non-native species
- Track species inventory
- Increase certified backyard habitat

Stormwater Management

- Capture & reuse / harvest water for agriculture
- Reduce city's outflow
- Increase green roofs
- Reduce impervious surface
- Restore natural streambeds

Commercial Streetscapes

- Every street does what it can to have trees & water management feature
- Treating water access & views as a public good
- Improve safety & walkability through streetscaping

Schools

- Garden for every school
- Broaden food education in schools (Food for Life/ Food is Elementary)

Public Education

- Connection between food choices & health
- Marketing for healthy food choices – targeting shopper of family

Economic Opportunities

- Creating jobs through urban agriculture
 - Growing
 - Distribution
- Business incubator for urban farming
- Opportunity through biomass collection
 - Energy
 - Compost
- Integrating carbon banks with Baltimore's green infrastructure

Remediation

- Stream restoration & daylighting (liberating streams)

Miscellaneous

- Renourishing soils- health
- Integrate sustainability goals into city's disposition process
- Require developments of certain size to include a percentage of land for green space
- Increase tree canopy
- Increase connectivity of green space/ parks

- Organization ideas for goals
 - Can keep an eye on the big picture while taking action today by having both near and long term goals
 - Russ Moss suggested 4 broad categories – 1. Green – trees, gardening 2. Education 3. Economic – food, job creation and 4. Water
 - Pearnell Wilson suggested organizing by Public and Private goals
 - Jonas Risen suggested 3 categories – 1. Social 2. Environmental and 3. Economic
 - Miriam suggested using categories pulled from the Vision Statement – 1. Recreation 2. Ecological 3. Agricultural 4. Civic Engagement

To Do:

Working group members to:

- Continue thinking about types of goals we should explore email any new ideas to Kate

Alyson & Kate to:

- Prepare for upcoming Community Conversation
- Review goals from brainstorming session and work towards refining them

Upcoming Events:

- Next GI WG Community Conversation, Thursday, July 17th 6pm, 901 N. Milton Ave.
- July Commission on Sustainability meeting, Tuesday, July 22nd 4pm
Baltimore City Department of Planning (417 E. Fayette St. 8th Floor)
- Next GI WG Working Session, Wednesday, August 6th 4:30 – 6pm, Baltimore City Department of Planning (417 E. Fayette St. 8th Floor)